Committee for the Development and Value Addition of Marble and Granite

†2531. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any committee was constituted in October, 1998 for the development and value addition of marble and granite;

(b) if so, the details of the objectives and members of these committees;

(c) the main recommendations of these committees; and

(d) the details regarding the implementation of these recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Department of Mines had reconstituted the Granite Development Council (GDC) *vide* Resolution dated 24.4.1998 and its terms of reference *inter-alia* included recommending measures for speedy development of granite, upgradation of techonlogy employed in mines and scientific exploration of the mineral, assess present taxation and royalty structure on granite etc. Its membership include Central Ministries/Department of Mines, Commerce, Environment and Forests and State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Karnataka, Gujarat, Kerala and the two subordinate Offices under the Department of Mines namely

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

Geological Survey of India (GSI) and Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) and members of granite industry.

Under the GDC a Group on Marble Development (GMD) was constituted in September, 1999 whose terms of reference *inter-alia* included assessment and review periodically the status of marble quarries and recommend measures for speedy development of the mineral, assessing technology employed in the marble quarries and recommend measures for upgradation of technology and scientific exploration of the mineral and to recommend measures for increasing value addition in marble, marble products and exports. Its membership include Departments of Mines and Commerce, State Government of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, and members of marble industry.

(c) and (d) The recommendations/achievements by the Granite Development Council are mentioned below:

(i) Granite Conservation and Development Rules (GCDR) 1999 which incorporated various recommendations of Granite Development Council were notified on 1.6.1999 for conservation and systematic development of and scientific mining to conserve the granite resources and to prescribe a uniform frame-work with regard to systematic and scientific exploration of granite throughout the country.

(ii) The Granite Development Council (GDC) constituted an Expert Committee whose terms and reference *inter-alia* included examining rate of royalty and dead rent on different grades of granite in different States and to suggest some broad uniformity for the development of granite industry. The recommendations of the Committee regarding royalty and dead rent have been accepted by the GDC and State Governments have been asked to suitably incorporate the recommendations in their respective Minor Mineral Concession Rules.

(iii) The GDC constituted a Committee for suggesting desirable degree of mechanization in granite quarries.

The recommendations have been accepted and sent to the State Governments and the Industry for appropriate action.

(iv) The National Institute of Rock Mechanics was enjoined to act as convenor for the 'Central Agency' for research and development of granite resources.

Plan to disinvest Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited

2532. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to disinvest Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited, a public sector limited;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government is aware of strong resentment over the reported move; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Disinvestment Commission in its XIII Report (January, 2002) has made certain recommendations regarding Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited. The views of the Department of Coal on these recommendations have been communicated to the Ministry of Disinvestment.

(c) and (d) In protest against the recommendations of the Disinvestment Commission, Trade Unions and Associations representing workmen, supervisors and executives had resorted to various forms of agitations from 3rd March, 2002 culminating in a token strike from 10 p.m. on 18.3.2002 to 10 p.m. on 20th March, 2002.